

Quality of Service and Complaints Procedures

Complaints

We always aim to provide the highest standards of service to all our clients and hope that you will be happy but as a regulated firm we are required to have a Complaint Handling Procedure and ours is set out below:

If you have any concerns, please contact the practice manager as soon as these arise so that they can be addressed promptly. If this does not address the issue to your satisfaction, you can raise a formal complaint, by contacting our office by:

- Telephone on: 01908 277577
 - Letter: Sherwoods Probate Services Ltd, First Floor, 27 Shirwell Crescent, Furzton Lake. Milton Keynes MK4 1GA
- Email: ruth@sherwoodsaccountants.co.uk
To help us understand your complaint and to ensure we do not miss any relevant information please provide your full name and contact details, and information about what you think has gone wrong and when this occurred.

All complaints will be acknowledged by email within four working days, so that you have confirmation that your complaint is being investigated.

We will then investigate your complaint, which will involve reviewing the file and speaking to relevant members of staff. We may need further information from you and will contact you if this is necessary. If appropriate we may invite you to a meeting to discuss the complaint. You would not be required to attend if you do not wish to, and we would be happy to discuss the matter with you on the telephone if you prefer.

At the end of our investigation, we will provide you with a written response detailing our findings and outlining what action we propose to take. We aim to do this within 28 days of receiving your complaint but will advise you in advance if this period needs to be extended.

Upon receipt of our letter detailing the outcome of our investigation and our proposed action, we would ask that within 14 days you contact us to either inform us:

- That you are satisfied with the action that has been taken and that we can therefore close the complaint, or
- That you are dissatisfied with what is proposed.
Where you are dissatisfied with the outcome of our investigation, we will carry out a further review of the complaint and consider any new information, if there is any. We will aim to do this within 14 days and then provide you with a final written response to your complaint detailing the findings and proposed action.

If your complaint relates to the service we have provided and you are still not satisfied with the outcome in our final written response to you or we have not provided a final written response to your complaint within 8 weeks of receiving it, then you may be able to have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints relating to poor service, but before accepting a complaint for investigation the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, and you are not satisfied with the outcome, then you can take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint and:
- No more than one year from the date of the act / omission that gave rise to the complaint; or
- No more than one year from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

The legal Ombudsman can be contacted by:

- Telephone: 0300 555 0333

- Email on enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
- Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
- Post: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ
As the firm is authorised by the CILEx Regulation, if your complaint relates to the misconduct of a CILEX member or CILEX Practitioner (ACCA Probate), you can refer your complaint free of charge to CILEx Regulation for them to investigate. Misconduct is defined as any breach of the CILEX Code of Conduct: [2.-Code-of-Conduct-2019.pdf \(cilexregulation.org.uk\)](https://www.cilexregulation.org.uk/2-Code-of-Conduct-2019.pdf) Misconduct complaints must be made within 12 months of the act or omission that gave rise to the complaint or within 12 months of the complainant having knowledge of the act or omission that gave rise to the complaint, whichever is the greater. CILEx Regulation can be contacted by:
 - Telephone: 01234 845770
 - Email on info@cilexregulation.org.uk
 - Website: <https://cilexregulation.org.uk>
 - Post: Room 301, Endeavour House, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedfordshire, MK45 4HS.
Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) bodies such as ProMediate of Brow Farm, Top Road, Frodsham WA6 6SP, www.promediate.co.uk exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. Currently we do not agree to using an ADR scheme as we believe our own inhouse investigation supported where necessary by that provided by the Legal Ombudsman and CILEx Regulation is sufficient.

Sherwoods Probate Services Limited is authorised and regulated as a CILEX ACCA Probate Entity. Authorisation Number 3001280.

Reliance on advice

We will endeavour to record all advice on important matters in writing. Advice given orally is not intended to be relied upon unless confirmed in writing. Therefore, if we provide oral advice (for example, during the course of a meeting or a telephone conversation) and you wish to be able to rely on that advice, you must ask for the advice to be confirmed by us in writing. However, bear in mind that advice is only valid at the date it is given.

Retention of papers

You have a legal responsibility to retain documents and records relevant to your tax or estate affairs. During the course of our work, we may collect information from you and others relevant to your affairs. We will return any original documents to you if requested.

When we cease to act for you we will seek to agree the position on access to cloud-accounting records to ensure continuity of service. This may require you to enter direct engagements with the software providers and pay for that service separately. Documents and records relevant to your tax affairs are required by law to be retained as follows:

Individuals, trustees and partnerships

- with trading or rental income: five years and 10 months after the end of the tax year;
- otherwise: 22 months after the end of the tax year.

Companies, LLPs and other corporate entities

- six years from the end of the accounting period.

While certain documents may legally belong to you, we may destroy correspondence and other papers that we store, electronically or otherwise, which are more than seven years old. This includes your documents if they have not been reclaimed by you within the seven-year period. You must tell us if you require the return of any specific document or their retention for a longer period.

You should retain documents that are sent to you by us as set out in the privacy notice, which should be read alongside these terms and conditions.